

## Hope for the Discouraged and Depressed, Part 9 - Romans 8:30 – May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012

- Today's teaching will be part nine of a series titled; "Hope for the Discouraged and Depressed."
- For the last three weeks, counting today, we have only taken and tackled one verse for what I hope will be deemed obvious and good reasons.
- Namely, that Romans 8:28-30, really the entirety of chapter 8, has the propensity to radically change our lives in ways we could never imagine.

- Now, I am keenly aware that saying that, that way, borders on the sensational, but please hear me out on this, and I promise you won't regret it.
- We have just read, and are about to study, one of the most profound verses in the pages of Holy Writ, and it's one for which we can find hope.
- Here's what I'm thinking, the promise here in verse thirty seals the deal of the promise in verse twenty eight, and even twenty nine along with it.

- v30 The Apostle Paul says those God predestined He also called, and those He called, He also justified, and those He justified, He also glorified.
- Romans 8:30 is a big verse, and one for which is arguably packed full of big words, which demand they be unpacked and organized correctly.
- Actually, it's this verse along with the many like them that have been the subject of fierce debate amongst many a Bible teacher over the years.

- I find it interesting how the Devil will seek to father lies, offer accusation, and author confusion, when it comes to verses like the one before us.
- I'm of the belief that his satanic strategy is to target verses like this one. He knows it's one of the biggies in which he can wreak much havoc.
- It seems Satan has been met with success by this verse related to the word predestination, and in so doing he has divided the body of Christ.

- At the risk of presenting an oversimplification there are basically two views related to the doctrine of predestination, chief of which is Calvinism.
- Calvinism utilizes the acronym, TULIP to make what's known as "The Five Points of Calvinism," which, sadly, is a false doctrine taught by some.
- In the interest of time, I won't go in-depth into this however, I think I'd be grossly remiss were I not to address it within the context of our text.

- First, let's unpack this verse, so we can start the process of understanding what it really means to be predestined by God Who foreknew us.
- This is one of those places in God's Word where it becomes helpful to look at what the text doesn't say, in order to better know what it does say.
- It does not say that God predestined us to be saved, rather, it does say that God predestined us because He foreknew that we would get saved.

One commentator said it best this way; "Foreknowledge does not just mean that God knows facts in advance, that He chooses people because he happens to know they will later believe. ...Long before a Christian knows God, God has known him or her and entered, in anticipation, into relationship. Predestination means that God begins to put this personal foreknowledge into effect."

- The implications of this are huge and can never be understated because if this was not true, and Calvinism was true, we are all in deep Kimchi.
- I realize this is a strong statement, but if you really think about it, you would have to remove some of the most powerful scriptures in the Bible.
- By way of example, John 3:16 would either have to be removed or rewritten to say that whosoever, among the predestined, would not perish.

- Another example is Ephesians 2:8-9, which would have to read something like this, for by grace you are saved if predestined, it's the gift of God.
- Yet another example is Romans 10:13 which would have to be rewritten as; "All the predestined who call on the name of the Lord will be saved."
- I could go on and on, but I won't, for a number of reasons, not the least of which is, that there are those who are infinitely more qualified than I.

- One such scholar, whom I've had the privilege of meeting and talking with while in the pastorate on mainland, is Dave Hunt of the Berean Call.
- This was 12 years ago, and during the time when Dave was writing his book titled; "What Love is This," Calvinism's Misrepresentation of God.
- After returning home, Dave sent me a portion of his manuscript to read, and my response to him was simply that he was spot on, in refuting it.

- I share all that to say this, verse thirty of Romans eight is one of the most, if not the most encouraging verses that's recorded in all of the Bible.
- Here's how I get there, if verse thirty is true, and it absolutely is, then I am so securely tied in my salvation that nothing could cause me to lose it.
- Perhaps better said, as we'll see later on in the chapter, my salvation is neither tentative, nor is it predicated, on my being predestined by God.

As one commentator so aptly put it, "...all those with whom God begins this process complete it. Unlike the successive years of a university course, there are no dropouts. There is no leakage. I have drawn out this sense by adding the word 'these' (a literal translation) three times in verse 30: every one of those who go through one stage, all these without exception, go to the next stage. So if in the present I have been justified, then, however terrible 'the suffering of this present time', I know I am unbreakably tied back to the foreknowledge, predestination and calling of God, and therefore safely secured to future glorification."

- This is why it is, how it is, this verse can give me much hope, and be the source of much encouragement in the sufferings of this present time.
- Calvinism leaves me discouraged and depressed at best wondering if I'm one of the elect all the while I'm in the sufferings of this present time.
- The bottom line is that Calvinism is riddled with ambiguity and if you've ever read their books, you'll not only be confused, you'll be uncertain.

In a masterful book titled; "Debating Calvinism," in which Dave Hunt ever so beautifully and brilliantly dismantles and even destroys James White's defense of Calvinism, Dave had to this say about their Romans 8 argument: "Calvinists cannot admit that foreknowledge means to know in advance what man will do of his free will, because that would disprove their theory. Pink writes, 'God foreknows what will be because He has decreed what shall be.'" Calvin said, "God foreknew what the end of man was to be...because he had so ordained by his decree." Piper says, "Foreknowledge is virtually the same as election.... He foreknows—that is, elects—a people for himself." Likewise, MacArthur says, "God's foreknowledge, therefore, is not a reference to His omniscient foresight but to His foreordination." But what is "foreknowledge" if not "omniscient foresight"? Moreover, to know in advance is clearly different from ordaining in advance. Romans 8:29 clearly distinguishes between foreknowledge and foreordination: "For whom he did foreknow [proginosko], he also did predestinate." Without this distinction, Paul would be saying redundantly, "For whom he foreordained [i.e., predestined] he also predestined." First Peter 1:2 makes the same distinction: "Elect according to the foreknowledge [prognosis] of God." Is Peter really nonsensically saying, "Elect according to the election of God"? Prognosis is found twice in the New Testament (Acts 2:23 and 1 Peter 1:2), and both times it is rendered "foreknowledge." Proginosko is found five times. It is translated respectively: knew me from the beginning; foreknow; foreknew; foreordained; know before. First Peter 1:20 is an aberrant rendering in the KJV (the NASB has "foreknown"). Yet to save his theory, the Calvinist insists on "foreordained" for all five passages, in spite of the redundancy it produces. Paul and Peter are both stating that foreknowledge is the basis of pre-destination and election. What would God know in advance that would cause Him to predestine certain people to heaven or hell? Nothing. Otherwise, unconditional election, a cornerstone of Calvinism, would be denied. The only reasonable answer is that those God knew from eternity past would believe the gospel were predestined to blessings." "Debating Calvinism," Five Points Two Views, pp. 85-87